

## Night 17

**Highlights from Surah Ash-Shu'ara:** This Surah was revealed during the middle Makkah period, during which the disbelievers of Makkah were persistently refusing to accept the message of Islam. They used to say sarcastically that only fools, youth or the destitute had embraced Islam. The Prophet<sup>SAW</sup> was in great anguish and grief over this. The Surah begins with words of consolation to the Prophet<sup>SAW</sup>: “Why do you fret for their sake? If these people have not believed in you, it is not because they have not seen any sign, but because they are obstinate. The story of the people of Musa<sup>AS</sup>, Ibrahim<sup>AS</sup>, Nuh<sup>AS</sup>, Hud<sup>AS</sup>, Salih<sup>AS</sup>, Lut<sup>AS</sup> and Shu'aib<sup>AS</sup> is then narrated to comfort RasulAllah<sup>SAW</sup> and to admonish the Kuffar that the mentality of the disbeliever has been the same throughout the ages; their arguments, objections, and the excuses for not believing have been similar, and so has been their ultimate fates – severe punishment from Allah<sup>SWT</sup>.

Then the discussion is summed up by saying: “O disbelievers, why do you insist on seeing those horrible signs that doomed the nations of the past? The Qur'an has been revealed in your own language and the Messenger is from among you. You know well that the Qur'an is nothing like what your poets or sorcerer can produce, and it is not brought down by Shaitan. Also, the Messenger is not like the unjust and cruel among you. So, why not accept the invitation of the Prophet<sup>SAW</sup>. If you don't, you will be sent to the Hellfire.

**Highlights from Surah An-Naml:** This Surah takes its name from the phrase Wadin-Naml, implying that the story of An-Naml (the Ant) has been related in it. Then, three types of characters have been presented. The first type is Fir'aun (Pharaoh), the chiefs of Thamud, and the rebels of the people of Lut<sup>AS</sup>. They all were heedless of the Hereafter and consequently became the slaves of their desires. They did not heed the admonition until moments before the punishment of Allah overtook them.

The second type is Prophet Sulaiman<sup>AS</sup> (Solomon), who had been blessed by Allah<sup>SWT</sup> with wealth and kingdom and grandeur. His humility towards Allah<sup>SWT</sup> is related through the story of the ants: When Sulaiman<sup>AS</sup> forces reached the valley of the ants, the ants were overwhelmed by his power. On hearing this, rather than gloating on his power, Sulaiman<sup>AS</sup> thanked Allah<sup>SWT</sup> and prayed: *“My Lord! Inspire and bestow upon me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favors that You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You!”*<sup>[27:19]</sup>. There is a lesson for all of us to be humble when Allah<sup>SWT</sup> bless us with authority, and to be ever thankful to Him, because by our self, we are nothing!

The third type is the queen of Sheba, who ruled over the most wealthy and well-known people in the history of Arabia. She professed shirk, which was an ancestral way of life for her, as well as a necessity to maintain her position as a ruler. But when the Truth became evident to her, nothing could stop her from accepting it. Her conscience was not devoid of the sense of accountability before Allah<sup>SWT</sup>.

**Highlights from Al-Qassas:** Al-Qassas means to relate events in their proper sequence. The main theme is to remove the doubts and objections that were being raised against the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad<sup>SAW</sup> and to invalidate the excuses that were being offered by disbelievers for not believing in him. The story of the Prophet Moses has been narrated which shows that Allah<sup>SWT</sup> provides the means and motives of whatever He Wills to do, in

imperceptible ways. For example, how Allah <sup>SWT</sup> made Pharaoh foster a child, who would eventually bring his downfall. Who can then fight Allah <sup>SWT</sup>? When the Quraish asked for miracles, Allah <sup>SWT</sup> told them that Musa, too was asked for many miracles. But when Allah enabled Musa to demonstrate Miracles, they called them Magic. The story of Musa <sup>AS</sup>, that happened some two thousand year ago, is told in such detail to prove that indeed Muhammad <sup>SAW</sup>, who was unlettered, is the Messenger of Allah.

In conclusion, the excuse that the disbelievers put forward for not believing in the Prophet <sup>SAW</sup> has been exposed. What they feared was that: “If we give up the polytheistic creed of the Arabs, and instead, accept the doctrine of Tauhid, this would put an end to our supremacy in the religious, political and economic fields, which, in turn, will destroy our position of the most influential tribe of Arabia and we shall be left with no refuge anywhere in the land.” As this was the real motive of the chiefs of the Quraish for their hostility towards Islam, and their doubts and objections were only excuses to deceive the common people, Allah <sup>SWT</sup> exposed them and offered them a way out of their falsehood for a better end.